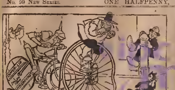
V.R.I.—HER LIFE AND EMPIRE. See page 6.

AFTER DARK.
ABSORBING! THRILLING!! EXCITING!!

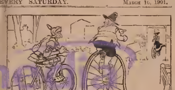
The Funny Wonder

½D

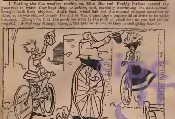
No. 99 New Series. ONE HALFPENNY, EVERY SATURDAY. March 16, 1901.



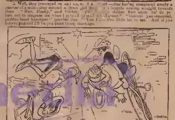
1. Finding the fine weather coming on, Slim Jim and Freddy Pialsoe opened the glass case in which they kept their valuables, and, carefully unwinding the cotton-wool, brought forth their bicycles. Jim's back wheel had got the enamel chipped somehow or other, so he was obliged to seek the aid of Mrs. Cummidge's copper-lid in order to be up to the mark. Except for that, the machines were in the pink of condition, as you can see for yourself. It was very strange, though, the number of people they passed going into fits.



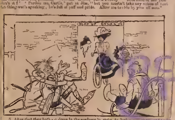
2. Well, they journeyed on and on, until a [illegible]—after having completed nearly a quarter of a mile—they noticed a smart girl [illegible] bicycle coming straight towards them. "Now, Jimmy," said Freddy, "[illegible] rotten New smile on' do ye best not to disgrace me when I present you to the charmer." "Garn! you conceited, pudden-faced knockpate!" growled Jim. "You leave this little lot to me. And if you behave yourself I'll let you come to our marriage."



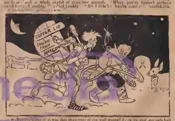
3. So, as it meant trying to cut each other out, both the gallants mopped along gaily and looked nice and pleasant. "Mornin', miss," cooed Freddy. "Nice time of the year, don't it?" "Pardon me, Gertie," put in Jim, "but you mustn't take any notice of that fat thing wot's speaking; he's full of puff and pride. Allow me to ride by your off side."



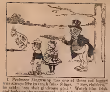
4. Then, just as they were about to pass on either side of the damsel, a brick wall seemed to jump out hard and hit them such a cosher! Our friends were knocked off their machines, and a whole skyful of stars flew around. "When you've finished perhaps you'll leave off pushing!" yelled Freddy. "No I didn't! You're another!" howled Jim. It [illegible]



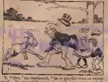
5. After that they both sat down in the roadway in order to look at [illegible] them, and find out who it was doing the onslaught. Then they saw what they'd been up to. They had cannoned into a cycle poster stuck on a brick wall. "You cabbage-head!" said Jim, "why didn't you see it was only an advertisement, you blitherin' bladder o' lard?"



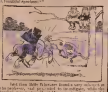
6. But the worst of it was that the owner of the wall wanted damages, and our pals had to fork up all the 1901 sixpences they had saved, or else he threatened to chase them with his bulldog. So they paid. Then came a joyful tramp home, and they got lost in the dark, and goodness knows what would have happened if Snowdrop, the trusty tripehound, hadn't started on their scent, and found them and guided them safely home. 10621



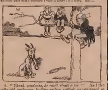
1. Professor Mugwump was one of those old fogeys who always like to teach folks things. "See, children," he said—"see that gladsome goat." Watch him frisk and frolic on the greensward and take particular notice of the graceful curvetings.



2. "See," he continued, "he is playful even to excitement. He would like me to join in his innocent gambols. That shows his liking for the society of man. Isn't he a beautiful specimen?"

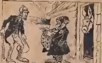


Just then Billy Whiskers found a very soft spot in the professor, and proceeded to investigate, while the learned man continued: "Also perceive the wonderful velocity with which we travel now. Children, this animal can butt harder than a horse can kick. ha!—

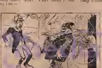


4. "*Thank goodness, he can't climb a tree!*" And the jolly old professor, feeling rather ruffled, as per proof in picture, put himself in a place where he could sling the yarn with less danger to his person and pants.

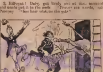
THE FRETFUL MULE.



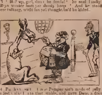
1. "Yass," said Uncle Pompey, "the mule do seem party funny lately. Can't make it out. Only t'other day I on—



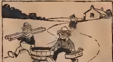
2. Biffwat! Daisy got lively just at that moment, and uncle got it in the neck. "Provea ma words," said Pompey. "See how wicious she gits."



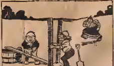
3. "Hol' up, girl, don't be fretful," he said kindly. "D'yo wanter hurt yer dandy heap?" And he stood there talking, while his pal thought he'd be killed.



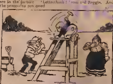
4. Pu' hey! [illegible] Uncle Pompey ain't made of jelly. He jest walked into that stable, and gave Daisy a dose of medicine to s[illegible] her nerves right, and she calmed down to nothing. [What do you think of this, dear reader? Ain't it wicked to tel such 'orrid stories?—BILLY WIZARD.]



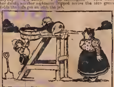
1. "Reckon aunty'll be nice we're going to start a shirt destroyin' laundry on our own," chuckled Georgie as he and Reggie trapped girls along with the few odds and ends you see in the picture. "Letterthunk!" snorted Reggie. And the procession proceeded.



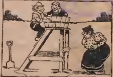
2. "Can't imagine what them two young rips is up to anyway!" said aunty. "I'll investigate!" And while her dainty number eighteens tripped across the nice green fields the kids got on with the job.



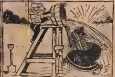
3. "Now then, boys," she yelled, "what are you doing — building an Eiffel Tower or a Board o' Works?" "Guess, aunty," chirped Reggie. "Guess." And to the tune of [illegible] aunty guessed—



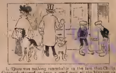
4. And kept on till she'd made eighteen wrong guesses at it. "Now, you wait an' see, aunty dear," said Reggie as they [illegible] the washtub. "You will be surprised when we tell you."



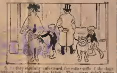
5. "Ready?" whispered Georgie. "Let [illegible] gal have the information right in the neck when I say 'Go'!" And while aunty thought what clever youths they were Georgie yelled—



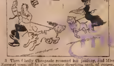
[illegible] "We was out [illegible] fireworks!" howled Reggie. "And you're supplied free for nothing!" But aunty didn't wait for any more pleasantries. She just made a bee line for the cane cupboard, and there'll be ructions later on.



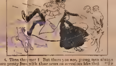
1. There was nothing remarkable in the fact that Cholly Cheapside stopped to have a good quiz at the Woman on view in a newsagent's. Neither was there anything strange about Miss Nicegirl's stopping to glance at "Chums," but these two things together gave those two things in the shape of boys an idea for a joke



2. So they carefully unfastened the collar ends of the dogs' tethers, and changed the tykes. The owners didn't notice the move so intent were they on having a cheap read from the shop-window. And if they'd only gone in and bought their copies nothing would have happened

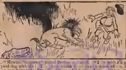


3. Then Cholly Cheapside resumed his journey, and Miss Nicegirl went off in the opposite direction, each, of course, with the other's dog. But were those unmuzzled canines to be parted thusly from their master and mistress respectivel? No, never a part, for before they had got a quarter of a mile on their journeys each flew back after its rightful owner.

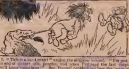


4. Then they met! But there you are, young men always are pretty free with their arms on occasions like that. "I-r-er-pardon me!" said Cholly. "Oh, don't mention it," replied Miss Nicegirl, smiling sweetly; "it was all Rover's fault. I shall give the old darling a severe slapping when I get him home." "Oh, don't! please, don't!" went on Cholly. So she didn't; but we don't mind telling you one thing she did do, and that was become Mrs. Cheapside a little later.

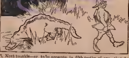
A TRUE ANIMILE STORY.



1. "Howlin' Snagers!" yelled Professor Popoff. "I do wish I'd got me yard dog with me! That lion wants more than a drink off me, I'll wager my knowledge box!" "Gurr-rrh!" went Leo, meaning yes. And he made a very large spring at poor Popoff.

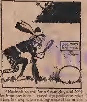


2. "This is a dead snap!" smiled the alligator behind. "I'm just at the end of a short tale, peoples, and when I've read the last chapter you'll know something!" But Popoff couldn't see how the 'gator was looking after him, and wept like a leaky beer-tap.

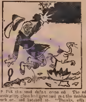


3. Next twinkle—or to be accurate, in fifth tenths of one—that lion was in the gator's pantry, trying to digest itself, and while the rescuer turned round to wash down the lunch, Professor Popoff popoffed in peace

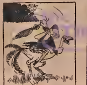
ANOTHER STORY THAT ENDS UP NICE AND HAPPY.



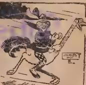
1. "Nothink to eat for a fortnight, and 500½ miles from nowhere," cried the professor, who had lost his way when taking a stroll far in the centre of darkest Africa. "Ha, an ostrich's egg. I perceive it through my spy glass, and it'll make a jolly good feed."



2. But the feed didn't come off. The silly burning-glass had gone and put the finishing touch on and hatched it. "Thanks, olly!" says the nostrich. "I was gettin' a trifle humpy in there, an I'm glad to get out for an airing. Toodle-oo!"



3. "Art u me, me bonny, blue-eyed bantam. Is that the way you leave yer uncle? Come home, and be taught manners!"



4. And that's how it was the old man saved his bacon, and got home in time for his tripe supper.

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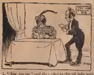
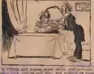
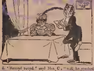


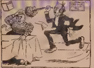
1. "Yes, mum," said the waiter to the old lady with the feather in her hat, "wotwillyhave?" And Mrs. Chiffins gazed dreamily over the menu.



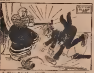
2. "Tripe and onions, caper sauce, mull gawl atty tawny soup, pickled eels' feet, and cabbage on toast for the first round!" said she. And the waiter took it down in shorthand.



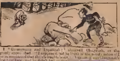
3. "Second round," said Mrs. C., "will be mashed taters and rice, kampdulceenned pommes de whiskers, and a pennorth of old unsweetened!" "Dern that feather!" thought the waiter, "I'll be tickled to death!"



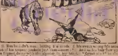
4. And the poor chap stood it as long as he could. Then he yelled: "Look 'ere, mum, I don't mind listenin' to recitin' one, but blest me if I'm going ter be tickled into laughin' at 'em!" And he jerked her cady off, wig and all!



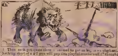
5. Then old Mrs. Chiffins got quite nasty, and say rude things about the incivility of that grubshop. Some of the remarks were made with her gamp, and when that waiter gets better he's going to join the fire brigade. He says it's less dangerous work.



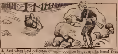
1. "Goosegrease and Inkpots!" observed Chugwash, as the grizzly approached. "I suppose it had to break in the usual custom if I never mentioned that there's trouble brewin'! [illegible] was Chugwash's first bear-hunt, and he didn't feel so [illegible]



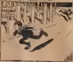
2. But he didn't mean letting the sands of his sweet young life ooze out of his trouser-pockets just then—not he! And as his hair flew up he flopped down with the shooter in his hand. "Great pip!" he observed, "I wish I'd gone nutting for tiddlers instead!"



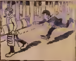
3. Then as it got quite close it seemed to get as big as an elephant. "Nothing short of a 4·7 gun will pop this playful creature off!" thought Chug, woe dolefully. "Farewell everybody, I'm booked!" Then he shut his eyes and fired.



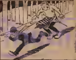
4. And when he'd collected enough courage to get up, he found that his imagination had been playing him tricks, and that he'd only shot a 12lb. cub after all. Anyway, he consoled himself with the fact that it was a real grizzly, and went home and bragged about it.



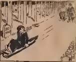
1. "Looks to me as if this interferin' c[illegible] golu' ter pinch me," observed Burglar Ben as he did a makebatte towards the dinner. "Just looking's cost to [illegible] bobses to hard [illegible]



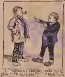
2. "A fuelopperty!" he gasped [illegible] paper [illegible] "That feller ain't seen' his tea tray [illegible] of [illegible]—

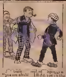


3. "Borrow it. Thanks, old chap, deeply obliged. Call at the bottom of the hill for it." And that bold bad Burglar Ben nipped off.



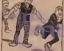
4. And now, gentle readers, this is where we are supposed to smile. Ben just squatted on that same tray and did a sleigh down hill so quick that Copper Kettle gave up and Ben was free. Now, then, let us us!—he [illegible] he he'

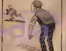




1. "I cannot Ginger," said Spiggins "I'll fight yer!" "Nah look 'ere little un," said Brother Bill "if I hits yer I'll kill yer—dead! So go home ter mammy."

2. "Darn," replied Spiggins, "you are afraid I'll dot you in the eyebrow!" "Orlright," said Bill "if yer ARE tired o' life then I'll put yer outer yer misery!"





3. But directly he'd took his coat off and handed it to Spiggins's pal, Spiggins did a [illegible]. "Gum!" he yelled, "you are a silly jossor! Hit me if yer kin catch me!"

4. "Well, I'm busted!" observed Bill, "I've bin done for me coat. That was clever!" And he forthwith went and pinched a new one from the nearest pop-shop.